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## Groups want plant closure proceeds invested in renewable energy

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SAN FRANCISCO (AP) -- Tribal leaders and environmental groups asked California energy regulators to take sale proceeds from the closure of a Nevada power plant and reinvest them in renewable energy projects.

Leaders of the Navajo and Hopi tribes in Arizona, along with representatives of the San Francisco-based Sierra Club and other environmental groups, filed the petition Wednesday with the California Public Utilities Commission.

On Dec. 1, operators of the Mohave Generating Station near Laughlin, Nev., closed the 1,580-megawatt power plant rather than install pollution control equipment estimated to cost \$1.1 billion. The station, about 100 miles south of Las Vegas, used coal from Black Mesa Mine in Arizona and served electricity customers in California.

The station's owners, including Southern California Edison, were expected to receive tens of millions of dollars from the sale of pollution credits that allowed the release of 53,000 tons of sulfur dioxide.

The tribes and environmental groups want those proceeds to be invested in energy projects that will help tribal communities affected by the plant's closure. About 200 mostly Navajo coal mine workers lost their jobs when the plant was shut down, according to the Just Transition Coalition, which filed the petition.

The groups seek funding from Southern California Edison's sale of about \$40 million per year in pollution credits to be used to clean up contamination, create jobs and develop renewable energy sources for the region.

"This is a way to bring about renewable energy such as wind and solar and a stronger economy for people who really need it," said Andy Bessler, southwest representative for the Sierra Club.

On Wednesday, PUC President Michael Peevey received the petition, and the commission would evaluate it, said PUC spokesman Susan Carothers.

Southern California Edison, which owns 56 percent of the station, was also evaluating the proposal and would not comment on it, said spokesman Gloria Quinn.

In 1999, environmental groups won a consent degree that required the plant, which was blamed for contaminating the region's air, to upgrade its pollution controls or close by Jan. 1 this year.

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